

Russell Street School

September

Newsletter

Autumn (First Half Term) 2023



Message from our Headteacher

We hope that you have all had a wonderful summer break. A warm welcome to our new Nursery and Reception families.

As we open for the academic year, we like to remind all families about the importance of regular attendance in school. Attendance is arguably one of the most important indicators of academic success. You cannot learn when you are not in school to learn. Being late into school (without good reason, such as an external exam) is also very unsettling and upsetting for children. We know that the Education Secretary is concerned about school attendance and announced last week that the government are pressing ahead with tougher attendance rules.

Following on from the government announcement that British Sign Language will now be available as a GCSE, we will now be teaching simple BSL across the school. All children will learn new signs weekly in an age appropriate way. Children and staff will communicate using taught BSL wherever possible. Signs being learnt each week will be added to parental communications (SWAYS).

Thank-you to the families who gave us such constructive feedback at the end of the last academic year. We consider all feedback very seriously and in light of comments made, we will be organising more trips for children this year and will be introducing the teaching of French as a foreign language. This will start with initial basic language skills, such as sounds and simple greetings. In addition, an after-school club will also be available to enhance the children's learning of the French language.

Forest School is being reintroduced across the school and is being led by Mrs Campbell and Mrs Clack. Forest School lessons make a difference in the following ways: **Confidence:** children have the freedom, time and space to learn and demonstrate independence. **Social skills:** children gain increased awareness of the consequences of their actions on peers through team activities such as sharing tools and participating in play.

Communication: language development is prompted by the children's sensory experiences. **Motivation:** the outdoors tends to fascinate children and they develop a keenness to participate and the ability to concentrate over longer periods of time. **Physical skills:** improvements are characterised by the development of physical stamina and gross and fine motor skills. **Knowledge and understanding:** children develop an interest in the natural surroundings and respect for the environment.

This newsletter contains a brief summary of some of the school improvements being introduced across the school this term. Each week year group leads will send you more in-depth information specific to classes through their weekly Sway so that you will be able to fully support your child at home.

Kind regards
Mrs Robinson



Curriculum Sharing Sessions

To ensure you know how to fully support your child/ren with their learning, curriculum information sharing lessons will take place on the following dates:

Reception – Wednesday 27th September

Year 1 – Wednesday 4th October

Year 2 – Wednesday 11th October

Sessions will be available during and after school.



Your child may wear non-uniform clothes to school on their birthday.

If your child has missed their birthday during the first week of September, they are able to still have a non-uniform day of your choice in school. If your child has P.E. on their birthday, you may wish them to wear their non-uniform items on a different day.



Mastering Number Programme

In 2021/22/23 we have taken part in the MathsHub Mastering Number Programme. This now continues for a third year in 2023/24.

Rehearsal, particularly core number work, helps children attain automaticity in recall and use of facts and methods. Central to the programme are small, abacus-like pieces of equipment called a Rekenrek.

Children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 have a daily extra maths session of 10 to 15 minutes, designed to ensure they develop fluency with, and understanding of, number that is crucial to future success in maths and academic progress.

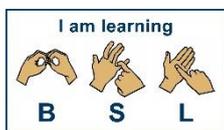


French Teaching

Thank you for end of academic year parental feedback. In light of comments made, from September 2023, all children to be taught French weekly in an age appropriate way.

Children will start with initial basic French language skills such as sounds and simple greetings.

All resources used will be authentic to ensure that the children access a realistic French language curriculum. After school clubs will also run teaching French.



British Sign Language

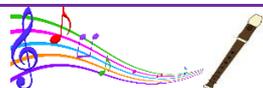
Following on from the government announcement that British Sign Language will now be available as a GCSE, simple BSL will now be taught across the school.

All children will learn new signs weekly in an age appropriate way. Children and staff will communicate using taught BSL wherever possible. Signs being learnt each week will be added to parental communications (SWAYS).



Houses

Children in Years 1 and 2 will continue to work in Houses this year and be awarded house points for their House for their work, behaviour and much more. Year 2 children will all have the opportunity to represent their house as a House Captain during the year.



Year 2 Recorders

Every child in year 2 will be taught how to play the recorder. There will be no charge for these lessons. Children will be given their own recorder.



Forest School

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Social skills: children gain increased awareness of the consequences of their actions on peers through team activities such as sharing tools and participating in play.

Communication: language development is prompted by the children's sensory experiences.

Motivation: the outdoors tends to fascinate children and they developed a keenness to participate and the ability to concentrate over longer periods of time.

Physical skills: improvements are characterised by the development of physical stamina and gross and fine motor skills.

Knowledge and understanding: children develop an interest in the natural surroundings and respect for the environment.



Nursery Outdoor Area

This year we wish to reconfigure the pond area of the school orchard to provide a quality outdoor Nursery learning area that enhances learning across the whole curriculum.

- The benefits of outdoor learning in the early years have now been firmly recognised for both educators and young children's learning and development. Being outside in the fresh air for three hours every day helps benefit brain and body functioning.
- Simply being outside improves health, social and emotional wellbeing, improved immunity, sight, sensorial and hearing development, neuro and physical development, and cognitive enhancement at a child's unique pace.

Providing a dedicated Nursery outdoor learning space will ensure high quality Nursery outdoor learning that will:

- Enrich Communication, Language and Literacy
- Enrich Collaboration, Mathematical Thinking and Problem Solving
- Enrich Investigation and Discovery



Year 2 – Spelling Shed

Year 2 will be piloting The Spelling Shed this year. These carefully selected word lists and engaging activities provide opportunities to incorporate phonics and meaning to strengthen spelling skills and build vocabulary acquisition.

Further information will be sent to Year 2 families.



Year 2 – White Rose Science.

Continuing the success of White Rose Maths, Year 2 will be trialling White Rose Science.

The key to the success of White Rose Science is the small steps approach. Essential aspects of key stage science into easily digestible chunks.

Through experiment, practice and discussion, children gain core knowledge around:

- Scientific vocabulary
- 'Working scientifically' skills including systematic and careful observations and following practical scientific methods
- The gathering and interpretation of straightforward scientific evidence
- The use of everyday materials and scientific equipment to solve science problems
- Articulating scientific concepts and using five types of science enquiries



Specialist Phonics (Reading), Writing and Maths teaching

We are extremely fortunate to be able to provide daily systematic instruction in Years R, 1 and 2 in Phonics, reading, writing and maths from specialist teachers.

Small group phonics teaching will take place in Years R and 1 with children being split between 8 members of staff. Mrs Palmiero will provide specialist writing teaching across the school and Mrs Krater and Mrs Thurgood will provide specialist maths teaching across the school.



Recycling Week: 19th – 25th September

Each year, MK City Council handles around 125,000 to 130,000 tonnes of waste and recycling. More and more people in MK are motivated to get it right. The WRAP Recycling Tracker 2021, shows that 88% of households now consider recycling normal behaviour.

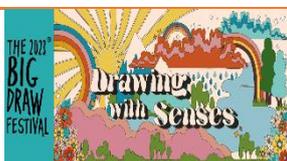
Most people however are putting at least one thing they shouldn't into their recycling. We will be teaching children what goes in each container for recycling and rubbish.



European Day of Languages – 26th September

Throughout Europe, 800 million Europeans are represented in the Council of Europe's 46-member states and all are encouraged to discover more languages at any age, as part of or alongside their studies. This stems from the Council of Europe's conviction that linguistic diversity is a tool for achieving greater intercultural understanding and a key element in the rich cultural heritage of our continent.

We will be celebrating our diversity of languages on the 26th September. If you are able to come into school to share a language you speak with us, please let us know by emailing office@russell-street-school.co.uk



The October 2023 Big Draw Festival theme is *Drawing with Senses*

The 2023 Big Draw Festival theme #DrawingwithSenses changes the focus from external to internal, exploring the way we personally process the world and internalise our experiences through our senses. This is a great year to look at the 5 basic senses: Touch, Sight, Sound, Taste and Smell.